

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in The Council Chambers, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 16 April 2008 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors K Baird, J Law, I Campbell, A Gaunt, W Lumsden, D Scott and B Vaughan and Mr I Jackson and Mrs H Bridge.

In Attendance: T Yule, B Renton, J Dickson, M Cochlan and J Jarvie (all Chief Executive's); G Stevenson, Executive Director (Corporate Services), D Henderson, R Thomson, H MacKenzie (all Corporate Services); J Fyffe, Executive Director (Education and Children's Services); B Atkinson and S Das (all Education and Children's Services); D Roberts, Executive Director (Housing and Community Care); J Walker, R Bean, G McFarlane and N Brian (all The Environment Service).

Councillor Baird, Convener, Presiding.

210. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

211. MINUTES

(i) Minute of Meeting of Scrutiny Committee of 6 February 2008

The Minute of Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 6 February 2008 (Arts. 48-54) was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

(ii) Audit Sub Committee of 23 January 2008

The Minute of Meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee of 23 January 2008 was submitted and noted. (*Appendix I*)

(iii) Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 1 February 2008

The Minute of Meeting of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 1 February 2008 was submitted and approved. (*Appendix II*)

212. STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2006/07 (Art. 161)

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (08/202), (1) providing information on service delivery during 2006/2007 across the range of Education and Children's Services responsibilities; (2) setting out the progress already made, and (3) detailing actions to be taken over the next three years in order to improve service delivery.

The Executive Director (Education and Children's Services), T Yule and B Renton answered members' questions on a number of issues.

Resolved:

- (i) It be noted that the Lifelong Learning Committee on 12 March 2008 had approved the Standards and Quality Report 2006/2007.
- (ii) The Education and Children's Services Standards and Quality Report for the period 2006/2007, detailed in the Appendix to Report 08/202, be noted.

213. STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2006/07 SUMMARY OF AUDIT SCOTLAND'S COMPARISON OF SCOTTISH COUNCILS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (08/198) (1) setting out Audit Scotland's performance measures; (2) summarising Perth and Kinross Council's performance for 2006/2007 in comparison with other Scottish local authorities, and (3) detailing where the Council's performance

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had improved, areas where improvement was needed and actions required where performance had deteriorated.

T Yule and D Roberts answered members' questions on a number of issues.

Resolved:

The results of Perth and Kinross Council Statutory Performance Indicators for 2006/2007 in comparison with other Scottish Councils, as detailed in Report 08/198, be noted.

MRS BRIDGE, J FYFFE, B ATKINSON AND M COCHLAN LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS STAGE.

214. IMPROVING PERFORMANCE IN DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

R Bean, Head of Planning and G McFarlane, Planning Change Manager gave an illustrated presentation on Improving Performance in Development Management although the Development Management Section had faced, and continued to face, a number of challenges in relation to the volume and complexity of planning applications, and also issues relating to staffing difficulties, the Section had prioritised areas for improvements. Significant changes had been introduced and Improvements had already been made. The presentation detailed performance indicators over the past 3 years for the percentage of householder planning applications dealt with within 2 months, the Scottish Government target and Perth and Kinross Council's performance compared to the 2006/2007 Scottish average. The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, when implemented, would present significant challenges for the Council.

R Bean, G McFarlane and N Brian answered members' questions.

R BEAN, G MCFARLANE, N BRIAN AND R THOMSON LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

B RENTON LEFT AND REJOINED THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM.

215. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PERFORMANCE REPORT 2007

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Corporate Services) (08/199) providing information on the Council's performance in relation to Freedom of Information requests during 2007.

G Stevenson and D Henderson answered members' questions.

Resolved:

The content of report 08/199 be noted.

COUNCILLOR D SCOTT LEFT AND REJOINED THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM.

D HENDERSON LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT

216. STRATEGIC BEST VALUE REVIEW OF EQUALITIES IMPLEMENTATION – FINAL REPORT (Art. 668/07)

There was submitted a report by the Head of Strategic Management and Improvement (08/200) (1) presenting the Strategic Best Value Review of Equalities, and (2) advising that the review forms part of the Strategic Best Value Review Programme and the Business Change and Improvement Framework approved by Council.

T Yule and H MacKenzie answered members' questions on a number of issues.

Resolved:

- (i) It be noted that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 7 November 2007 had approved the Strategic Best Value Review of Equalities Implementation – Final Report.
- (ii) The Strategic Best Value Review of Equalities Implementation – Final Report be noted.

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217. EQUALITIES STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2007-2010 (Art. 803)

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (08/201) presenting the Council's Equalities Strategy and Action Plan for the period 2007-2010.

Resolved:

- (i) It be noted that Perth and Kinross Council on 19 December 2007 approved the Equalities Strategy Action Plan 2007-2010.
- (ii) The Equalities Strategy and Action Plan 2007-2010, as detailed in the Appendix to Report 08/201, be noted.

218. FORWARD PLAN FOR SCRUTINY – ACTION PLAN

The Convener gave an update on progress with the Forward Plan for Scrutiny. A one day training session would be held in April / early May on the Role, Remit and Responsibilities. Some work had already been done on items for scrutiny reporting; a copy of the scrutiny reporting mechanism, which would be discussed further at the session, was tabled for members' information.

A two day training programme on elected member development in the area of scrutiny would be held later in May. Benchmarking visits to East Renfrewshire and Scottish Borders Councils had already taken place and a visit to Aberdeenshire Council had been planned.

219. SPECIAL MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14 MAY 2008

Resolved:

A Special Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee be held on Wednesday 14 May 2008 at 2.00pm.

220. VALEDICTORY

The Convener referred to Tina Yule's secondment to Audit Scotland. Members of the Committee joined the Convener in wishing Tina every success in her new post.